

# New library will open in Bloomington; huge celebration is planned

Posted: Monday, May 9, 2016 8:39 am

San Bernardino County will hold a grand opening celebration for the new Bloomington Branch Library on Saturday, May 14.

The 6,700-square-foot library is part of the newly-completed Bloomington Grove affordable housing apartments and Lillian Court senior community. The library is located at 18028 Valley Boulevard in Bloomington.

The new library features a children's reading area, private study rooms and computer lab.

The free community celebration event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. A public dedication ceremony and ribbon cutting for the library will be held from 10 to 11 a.m., followed by lunch and library tours.

As many as eight food trucks will be on site that day serving a mix of hot dogs, sliders, grilled cheese, Kona ice and cupcakes, as well as other items. The first 1,700 attendees will receive a complimentary lunch and dessert ticket.

The family-fun celebration will have music and entertainers including magicians, balloon storytelling and live animals. Booths will feature treats and games.

The County Library and Colton Unified School District's Super Hero Reading Program will be involved in the event, offering surprise guests and giveaways. Attendees will also learn more about Vision2Read, a Countywide Vision campaign designed to focus attention on the importance of reading, highlight literacy-related programs and services throughout the county and connect people to available reading resources and/or volunteer opportunities.

"It's exciting to bring the fun of books and reading right into the neighborhood, in a way that will



## Library

The new branch library in Bloomington will open on May 14.

encourage greater access to learning for our local families," said 5th District Supervisor Josie Gonzales, who represents Bloomington along with the eastern part of Fontana. "The Bloomington Grove family housing, along with Lillian Court senior housing, provide a unique opportunity for residents to live, work and stay in Bloomington. I am so proud of this investment, which demonstrates this county's strong commitment to our unincorporated area residents."

Along with the library, the county pursued development of 106 affordable housing apartments for seniors and families. The county will begin construction for the second phase of an additional four-acre site which will add 85 units to the Bloomington Grove affordable housing development. The second phase is set to open in the spring of 2017.

# Survivor reinvents career

Posted: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 7:49 am

Liberata Ashilevi was a survivor of the Rwandan Genocide who immigrated to the United States as a refugee. As a resident of Loma Linda, she turned to the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board's America's Job Center of California (AJCC) for help with building her career. Today she enjoys working in the Loma Linda University Medical Center Operating Room caring for others.

Though she was a certified physician's assistant in Zambia, Liberata took a housekeeping job when she arrived in the United States. When she was laid off from this position, she felt she had nowhere to turn.

"When I was laid off, I panicked," Liberata exclaimed. "When I arrived at the San Bernardino America's Job Center of California and met their staff, I became hopeful about my future."

Workforce Development Specialist Nidia Vargas was assigned to handle Liberata's case. The two women soon formed a bond that Liberata says is everlasting.

At the AJCC, Liberata received career counseling, and help with her job search, resume, and interview skills. The Workforce Development Board also provided funding for her to earn her Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) certificate, to put her on a new career path, and assisted with travel to classes and job interviews.

As a result of the service she received, Liberata was well prepared to answer questions volleyed to her by the Loma Linda University Medical Center Operating Room Technician position interview panel. Her first call to share the good news was to Nidia at the AJCC.

"It is always heartening to hear success stories such as Liberata's," said San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. "It is validation that the County is serving its residents



**Liberata Ashilevi**

Liberata Ashilevi of Loma Linda is a survivor of the Rwandan Genocide who immigrated to the U.S. as a refugee. She turned to the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board for employment assistance and successfully acquired a position as an operating room technician at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

well, and working to attain countywide prosperity.”

Liberata has already received a promotion and looks forward to a successful career. She has embraced the American Dream with a contagious exuberance.

“Our staff’s care and concern for the people we are helping lends to successful outcomes for job seekers,” said Workforce Development Board Executive Director Sandy Harmsen. “This is an example of how our staff members are truly dedicated to helping others achieve their goals.”



**BREAKING NEWS** Woman found dead at scene of Lomita apartment fire



NEWS

## YUCAIPA NEIGHBORHOOD SWARMED BY FLIES



By [Rob Hayes](#)

Monday, May 09, 2016 10:02PM

YUCAIPA, Calif. (KABC) -- A Yucaipa neighborhood plagued with flies is looking to San Bernardino County officials for help.

"Tons of flies. An enormous amount of flies. It's just filthy. It's disgusting," Yucaipa resident Dena Hall exclaimed.

Hall and her neighbors said their entire community has been swarmed with flies and they believe a collection of three chicken farms nearby are to blame.

"There are huge mounds of manure that I have seen there sit for two weeks," Yucaipa resident Linda Bedford said.

The chicken ranches have been running for decades, way before the neighboring communities were built.

Residents said the flies used to be manageable, but that over the last couple years, some of the ranchers have been slow to remove chicken waste, which is providing perfect breeding conditions for the flies.

ABC7 spoke to the chief financial officer of the Hidden Villa Ranch over the phone and he said his facility removes its chicken

5/10/2016

Yucaipa neighborhood swarmed by flies | abc7.com

waste every day and has offered to help the other ranches do the same.

We were unable to reach the owners of the other two facilities.

San Bernardino County Supervisor James Ramos said Mosquito and Vector Control has been monitoring the chicken ranches and was investigating their pest-control efforts.

"There is something going on and we are looking into it," Ramos stated.

But Ramos said that the county has little say over zoning regulations and fines.

"The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, we really look at the unincorporated areas. So this is within the sphere of influence of city of Yucaipa," Ramos explained.

Frustrated residents claimed the city has ignored the fly problem and said they hoped officials would help to deem the area a "no-fly" zone.

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Early voting underway in San Bernardino County for 2016 primary election

By Beau Yarbrough, The Sun

Monday, May 9, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> “Here to vote?”

“Here to vote!” Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-San Bernardino, confirmed Monday morning at the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters office.

Aguilar, his wife, and a group of re-election campaign staffers were the first in line Monday morning as [early voting began](#) for the June 7 primary.

Vote-by-mail ballots began appearing in San Bernardino County voters’ mailboxes Monday. Those can be dropped off at the registrar’s office, or voters can cast a traditional paper ballot there, six days a week.

The San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters office is open for early voting from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office also will be open the Saturday before the primary, June 4, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The office is located at 777 E. Rialto Ave. in San Bernardino.

Early voting locations also are open at the same time at the Ontario Conference Center, 1947 E. Convention Center Way, and at Victorville City Hall, 14343 Civic Drive.

For more information, call 909-387-8300.

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160509/early-voting-underway-in-san-bernardino-county-for-2016-primary-election>

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## Nestle objects to Forest Service plan to renew water permit in San Bernardino Mountains

By Jim Steinberg, The Sun

Monday, May 9, 2016



Nestlé Waters North America has alleged the U.S. Forest Service's proposed action for renewing the company's [permit to pipe water out of a remote canyon](#) in the San Bernardino Mountains treads on the firm's long-established water rights and violates state procedures.

The firm's disapproval of the process to renew its Special Use Permit in Strawberry Canyon is detailed in a 79-page document recently submitted to the Forest Service.

In a statement, Nestlé said that while it "shares a number of goals with the Forest Service" it is "concerned that the action proposed by the Forest Service would disrupt established water rights and the long-standing legal process of regulating water use in the state of California."

The proposals suggested by the Forest Service would override more than a century of California Law, Nestlé said.

"This would have potentially far-reaching consequences for businesses, agencies and individuals and other water rights holders throughout the state," the statement said.

"It would be premature to respond," said John C. Heil III, a spokesman for the Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Regional Office in Vallejo.

Both the permit and Nestlé's withdrawal of water from a canyon watershed, which environmental groups deem critical for several endangered species, has been a growing controversy for several years.

Outcry has intensified with continuation of the drought.

Late last year, the Center for Environmental Diversity, Story of Stuff Project and Courage Campaign Institute filed a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service for allowing Nestlé's pipelines, pumps and other structures on federal land after the company's permit expired 28 years ago.

[Under Forest Service regulations, an expired permit remains in effect until it is renewed or denied.](#)

A hearing is scheduled for May 16 before Judge Jesus G. Bernal in U.S. District Court in Riverside.

In April, the Courage Campaign, an online community group, handed San Bernardino National Forest



personnel a petition with more than 200,000 signatures seeking to halt Nestlé's operations while forest officials conduct a "rigorous and thorough environmental review."

In March, the Forest Service unveiled a proposal to issue Nestlé Waters North America a five-year special-use permit for the use of the National Forest System to operate using existing improvements in the Strawberry Creek watershed.

As part of the plan, the San Bernardino National Forest is initiating its first ever National Environmental Policy Act analysis of Nestlé Waters North America's special-use permit.

The plan calls for the permit to be granted unless environmental study suggests Strawberry Creek's water flow is being compromised by those operations, a San Bernardino National Forest hydrologists have said.

Nestlé collected 36 million gallons from Strawberry Creek in 2015, up from 28 million gallons in 2014, company officials say, adding that precipitation was 20.2 percent greater in 2015 than the previous year.

"The precipitation in the area of our Arrowhead Springs for the 2015 rain year was 20.2 percent greater than in 2014, said Jane Lazgin, a Nestlé spokeswoman.

In exchange for allowing Nestlé to continue siphoning water from the Strawberry Canyon, the Forest Service receives \$524 per year.

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## COACHELLA VALLEY: Mosquitoes linked to Zika virus make local debut

By [RICHARD BROOKS](#)

2016-05-09 19:20:33



Mosquitoes capable of transmitting Zika virus and other deadly diseases have been found for the first time in the Coachella Valley, local officials said.

Health officials confirmed the identification Monday, May 9, of the critters found in a Coachella residential neighborhood near Calle Camacho and Calle Rojo, just southwest of Harrison Street and Ave. 52.

"This marks the first detection of *Aedes aegypti* in the Coachella Valley," Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District officials said in a written statement. "The district will be sending out surveillance and control teams...over the next several days to evaluate the extent of the infestation

and aggressively target problem areas."

Traps already have been set in the neighborhood where the discovery was made. And teams are conducting door-to-door inspections for mosquito breeding and standing water.

The mosquitoes can carry Zika, dengue, yellow fever and chikungunya, though officials emphasize that those viruses are not known to be transmitted in California by mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes of the type found in Coachella have previously turned up in Riverside, San Jacinto and other Southern California locations.

The most common Zika symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Discovered in 1947 and named after the Zika Forest in Uganda, the first human cases of the disease were documented in 1952.

People are most commonly infected with Zika through mosquito bites, though the disease also can be transmitted from mother to child, through sexual contact and blood transfusions, according to the CDC.

To prevent Zika infestations, local officials are urging residents to inspect their yards and drain any standing water that has collected in potted plants, bird baths, rain gutters, discarded tires, poorly maintained swimming pools and other containers.

The mosquitoes bite during the day and are more aggressive than native species, say officials who urge the use of repellents containing DEET and other EPA-registered ingredients.

Other preventive methods include the use of well maintained window and door screens and the wearing of long sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and shoes.

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Could water relief be near for Inland Empire residents?

Local agencies could be given the opportunity to set their own goals as long as they remember shortage still exists across California

By David Downey, The Press-Enterprise

Monday, May 9, 2016

Inland water officials may finally get what they wanted: the opportunity to set their own conservation targets. And that could bring relief to thousands of homeowners who have struggled to cut back and still keep lawns and gardens alive.

After a year of enforcing a 25 percent reduction statewide and some sharper cuts locally, state officials Monday proposed setting aside mandated targets and letting agencies develop their own goals for this summer and fall, citing the wet winter up north that refilled crucial reservoirs.

The State Water Resources Control Board is scheduled to take up the plan May 18.

But don't start thinking the drought's over.

Mark Cowin, director of the California Department of Water Resources, emphasized that the state remains in the throes of a five-year dry spell despite the improved conditions up north.

And, said Felicia Marcus, chairwoman of the State Water Resources Control Board, "This is not a time to start using water like it's 1999."

Also on Monday, Gov. Jerry Brown issued an executive order making permanent a temporary ban against the wasteful practices of hosing off sidewalks and driveways, washing cars with hoses not equipped with shut-off nozzles, and letting lawn water run into the street.

Despite the easing of cutbacks, suppliers will have to continue reporting water use to the state and make contingency plans for droughts as long as five years. And new, permanent water-use efficiency standards will have to be developed.

It makes sense to focus on making permanent lifestyle changes, said Deven Upadhyay, group manager of water resource management for the Metropolitan Water District, Southern California's largest water provider.

"The governor's announcement today and the executive order is starting to move the conversation a little away from emergency conservation and toward long-term conservation," he said.

Base it on supply

Local agencies welcomed the change.

“It sounds like we’re going to be able to figure out what works best for our community,” said Kristeen Farlow, a spokeswoman for the Cucamonga Valley Water District, which serves about 200,000 people in Rancho Cucamonga, and portions of Fontana, Upland and Ontario.

“We’re, of course, extremely happy about the news, but cautiously optimistic because you never know what’s going to actually happen,” said Todd Jorgenson, assistant general manager for water for Riverside Public Utilities.

Ditto for the Eastern Municipal Water District, which serves about 600,000 people in the Interstate 215 corridor of Riverside County stretching from Moreno Valley to Murrieta.

“We’ve always said, ‘Base it on your supply,’” said Kevin Pearson, an Eastern spokesman.

It means customers likely won’t have to cut back on lawn watering this summer as intensely as they did in 2015, although Pearson said it was premature to say by how much his district’s conservation target would be reduced. He said the Eastern board will take up the matter in June.

While the April 2015 order called for 25 percent conservation overall statewide, individual targets were assigned to the different agencies. And many Inland agencies were ordered to go beyond that.

Riverside and Eastern were given 28 percent reductions, and Cucamonga Valley was assigned a target of 32 percent. The city of Riverside filed suit to challenge its target.

El Nino didn’t save us

The change in approach comes as the region’s primary provider, giant Metropolitan Water District, is poised to enter the watering season without limiting allocations to agencies it serves. Last year Metropolitan cut allocations by 15 percent.

Metropolitan’s board is set adopt plans for the summer on Tuesday.

Upadhyay said Metropolitan expects to receive much more in the way of State Water Project deliveries of Sierra Nevada water. After three years of drawing down its reserves, Upadhyay said Metropolitan expects to begin building those back up this year.

The most visible reflection of those reserves is Diamond Valley Lake.

The giant lake near Hemet is less than half full today, Upadhyay said. But the water level is rising to the point a boat launch is set to open this month. And by year’s end, it could be two-thirds full, he said.

Sacramento officials also cited the nearly full reservoirs up north that are triggering the boost in deliveries.

“While El Niño didn’t save us, it did help us,” said Marcus, the state water board member.

Not a cake walk

As a result, Marcus said the “blunt instrument” of the 25 percent statewide order is no longer needed.

And, with the water board’s consent later this month, officials intend to allow agencies to self-certify their conservation targets.

But Marcus said agencies will be watched closely to make sure they base targets on real on-the-ground conditions.

“It is not a cake walk,” she said.

Those targets will have to reflect how much water agencies would have to operate with if the next three years matched the last three dry seasons of 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, said Max Gomberg, climate and conservation manager.

If the numbers reveal such conditions would leave a 10 percent shortfall, for example, Gomberg said, then an agency would be required to enforce a 10 percent cutback June through next January.

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## Drought prompts Gov. Brown to ban hosing of sidewalks, driveways

Agencies will have to prove they can withstand 3-year shortage

By Steve Scauzillo, San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Monday, May 9, 2016



Saying the drought is far from over, Gov. Jerry Brown issued an executive order Monday that permanently bans water-wasting practices such as hosing off sidewalks and sprinkler runoff, setting in motion a five-year plan that assesses state water supplies in an effort to prepare for continuous water shortages.

“We are preparing for longer and more severe drought cycles that we know are in California’s future,” said Mark Cowin, director of the California Department of Water Resources.

However, since Northern California received above-average rainfall this past winter and many reservoirs that feed the State Water Project were filled to capacity, water conservation targets for the state’s 411 urban water agencies will be scrapped, bringing relief to those cities that could not meet their goals.

Instead of hard targets between 4 percent and 36 percent as compared to 2013, each city and water agency will be asked to take a stress test, similar to banks under the Dodd-Frank Act, and prove they are able to withstand another three years of drought.

For example, if an agency foresees a supply shortage of 10 percent, it will be affixed a mandatory conservation standard at that number, explained Max Gomberg, climate and conservation manager for the State Water Resources Control Board. The self-certification would rely on each agency’s assertions of how long current water supplies could stretch during three dry years comparable to the water-tight years of 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Wholesale water suppliers, such as the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, would be required to predict supplies to member agencies during the three-year drought scenario. MWD buys water from Northern California and the Colorado River and sells it to local agencies, including the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

New sources of water would be counted toward overall supplies. For example, the Water Replenishment District in southeast Los Angeles County would be able to count recycled water from sewage treatment plants that is fed into spreading grounds to replenish underground wells. Those cities and retail water agencies that benefit from groundwater recharge would be required to conserve less in the coming years.

And suppliers in water-rich counties, like Humboldt County, would most likely pass the stress test and not be required to conserve, Gomberg explained.

Some criticized the state for changing existing emergency regulations, saying it will remove stiff targets and replace them with self-reported values and ambiguous conservation goals.

But Felicia Marcus, chairwoman of the state board, said during a press conference Monday that the new rules were “tailored to the circumstances we find ourselves in now.”

“It is based on planning for three really bad years. It is a conservative reach. It is not a cake walk,” she said.

Unlike the winter of 2014-15, when the state’s snowpack hit a 500-year low, Sierra snowpack last month was near average, thanks to recent El Niño storms. Key Northern California reservoirs were filled. The State Water Project will deliver 60 percent of its allocation, up from 10 percent in December.

“The drought is not over,” Gomber explained. “The severity of the emergency has diminished,”

The governor’s plan, which will require legislation to enact, will ask water suppliers for a five-year plan. Brown’s plan calls for increased water efficiency from farmers and permanent water-use reporting to bring about a 20 percent urban water reduction by 2020.

“Now we know that drought is becoming a regular occurrence and water conservation must be a part of our everyday life,” Brown said in the statement.

Brown and environmental groups are in agreement that global warming, combined with California’s extreme drought-flood cycles, demand permanent water emergency readiness.

“The state as a whole needs to move from temporary and ad hoc measures to a longer-term strategy that can ensure that California’s people and environment will continue to thrive in the face of a changing climate,” said David Festa, senior vice president of the ecosystems program for the Environmental Defense Fund.

The State Water Resources Control Board will take up the new emergency water regulations on May 18. The new measures could be in place by early June and extend through January 2017, state water officials said.

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## San Bernardino to consider marijuana policy Tuesday

By Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Monday, May 9, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> City officials and any interested members of the public will meet Tuesday to discuss medical marijuana, the possibility of replacing the city's ban with regulations and what further study should be done.

The legislative review committee — chaired by Councilman John Valdivia and including Councilmen Henry Nickel and Benito Barrios — meets at 4 p.m. in City Council chambers at City Hall, 300 N. D St.

San Bernardino has banned marijuana dispensaries since 2010. The dispensaries are subject to fines of \$1,000 per day, and on Thursday, police [served a warrant](#) at The Break Room dispensary on Kendall Drive that remains closed.

But more than 30 remain open in defiance of the ban, which is unacceptable, Valdivia said last week.

"I don't have an opinion on whether it should be legalized or not. I'm trying to understand how best to approach it," Valdivia said, adding that the issue includes facets other than dispensaries. "I understand the certain few individuals in our community have certainly told me they're not in favor of dispensaries. I am simply trying to yet again understand what are the challenges and the threats posed to children, to public safety, what are the challenges and what are the tools available to municipalities."

California, where medical marijuana use was legalized 20 years ago, [continues to implement laws](#) related to its use, and at least six follow-up bills are pending in the Legislature, covering everything from a training program for industry employees to substituting the word "cannabis" for "marijuana" in the law.

After considering the issue, the council committee is expected to send a recommendation for the full City Council to vote on.

Four of the seven council members voted last week to send council members to other cities to study how marijuana regulation works there, but Mayor Carey Davis [vetoed the vote](#), saying the information could be gotten less expensively.

LOCAL

# This California desert town is experiencing a marijuana boom



Growers now operating at this facility in downtown Los Angeles will be among the tenants of a planned 380,000-square-foot facility in Desert Hot Springs. (Mel Melcon / Los Angeles Times)

By **Paloma Esquivel** • Contact Reporter

MAY 10, 2016, 3:00 AM | DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CALIF.

**C**arlos Bravo, the owner of a tow company here, was at work late last year when a real estate agent came to him offering half a million dollars for 5 acres of undeveloped, brush-pocked desert — five times what he'd paid for the land six months earlier.

"I thought he was joking," Bravo said.

The man came back the next day, making it clear he was not.

A few days after he had signed the paperwork, Bravo said, another man offered him \$1 million.

As the first city in Southern California to legalize large-scale medical marijuana cultivation, Desert Hot Springs has been inundated by marijuana growers and developers. They are buying up dusty desert land — some with no utilities or roads — in hopes of cashing in as California's marijuana growers come into the open under new state regulations.

"It's pretty chaotic," said Coachella Valley real estate broker Marc Robinson. "I'm getting tons of calls from all over the world, all over the United States. My newest clients flew over from Germany."

Despite a sizable need for new infrastructure to support the indoor growing projects, the rush has officials in this downtrodden town dreaming of new income.

"I can only imagine what we can do with the tax revenue," Mayor Scott Matas said. "We're in need of parks, our roads are dilapidated. All around — our sidewalks, curbs, gutters."

The city is pushing hard to help developers get their projects up and running as it increasingly faces competition from a number of desert cities also eager to bring growers to town.

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Desert Hot Springs' foray into marijuana stemmed from financial need, officials said.

The city has long tried to position itself as a Coachella Valley tourist destination alongside its resort-town neighbors south of Interstate 10, but it's never managed to attract the same level of development. Median household income here is \$33,500 — far below the state median.

The town's destinations simply aren't enough "for it to become a vibrant and viable city instead of just a dusty little town north of the I-10," said Heather Coladonato, president of the Desert Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, which is working closely with growers.

In 2014, after the city declared a fiscal emergency, the council voted to legalize dispensaries and cultivation. Zones where growing was permitted were established, including on a stretch of barren desert dotted with a couple of churches and auto repair shops.

Since the ordinance passed, officials have approved applications for at least 11 businesses with plans for more than 1.7 million square feet of cultivation operations.

Each year, the city will tax growers \$25 per square foot of cultivation space for the first 3,000 square feet and \$10 per square foot after that. At least eight other projects are in the approval process.

Police Chief Dale Mondary said he had strong reservations about the city's move toward cultivation.



"Just from a law enforcement standpoint, obviously we're philosophically opposed," he said. "I took the stance: 'I can either pout about it or get on board and at least have my voice heard.'"

The businesses have agreed to hire 24-hour armed security guards and install cameras that police can access remotely, Mondary said. They're also planting what he called "hostile landscaping" — cactus and other plants that could be difficult for intruders to pass.

No cultivators are up and running yet, though a small number could be growing by this summer, officials said.

Growers, many of whom have been quietly practicing their trade in garages and other underground spaces for years, are eager to "come out of the shadows," said Jason Elsasser, who is planning a 2-acre project in town.

The rush to set up shop in cities that permit cultivation was pushed forward by state legislation signed into law late last year. Growers will be able to apply for state licenses by 2018, but they will have to show they have local licensing before they can get a state permit, said Steve Lyle, a spokesman for the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

The crush of developers in Desert Hot Springs led to a tripling of land prices in the area, real estate brokers said.

But there are signs that the projects — which require intensive lighting and air conditioning — could face long infrastructure delays. In recent weeks, owners learned it could take years just to get sufficient electricity to some of the businesses.

Southern California Edison spokesman Robert Laffoon-Villegas said the utility expects that some growers' power needs could be so large that "it would be like adding a small city to the system."

"In order to do that safely it does require significant study ... and it may require significant infrastructure," he said.

Meda Thompson, a real estate broker who advertises on fliers decorated with marijuana leaves, said the issue has caused some properties to fall out of escrow.

To help address the concerns, the city manager is now preparing to hire a project manager who would oversee infrastructure issues for growers.

In the meantime, the city is facing increasing competition.

In nearby Cathedral City, officials recently began accepting applications from growers and dispensaries.

So far, they have received about 20, said Community Development Director Pat Milos.

In San Bernardino County, Adelanto began accepting applications from growers late last year.

That city, which has been on the brink of insolvency in recent years, has asked applicants to sign a statement acknowledging its financial hardship and agreeing to "support, and not oppose, any initiative that the city or the voters of the city initiate to raise business taxes and business license fees."

So far, it has approved at least 30 applicants who have proposed operating more than 1.2 million square feet of cultivation space. Some, like in Desert Hot Springs, would be in now-vacant desert plots.

The city of Coachella, meanwhile, has opened an area to growers previously zoned for auto wreckage yards.

Mayor Steven Hernandez said he expected the businesses to bring better-paying jobs to the city's low-income residents, particularly migrant farmworkers.

"I've got a lot of people working in the fields every day," he said. "If I can get those guys into the middle income ... they can buy themselves a nice house in Coachella and maybe not have to work so much."

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Calabasas attorney Bob Selan is leading an effort by several dispensaries to build a 380,000-square-foot cultivation business park in Desert Hot Springs.

The challenges of building from the ground up in the desert have been great, he said.

"The way you have to design these things for climate control and conserving water and conserving energy, it's very hard to do it, and it's very expensive," he said. "We have consultants, engineers, architects, lawyers, accountants, you name it ... on top of that we have all the cannabis experts."

Though the scramble to establish large-scale facilities has been influenced by the possibility that Californians may legalize recreational use of marijuana this year, Selan said his facility would do fine even without such a law.

"The demand for medical products was so high, this was just to fill the need for that," he said.

Elsasser, who is planning the 2-acre project, had a successful real estate company in Yucca Valley until the housing crash. The downturn left him with several vacant homes, in which he used to grow marijuana.

"Cannabis cultivation kind of saved me," he said.

On a recent weekday, he walked through an empty steel-shell building on Little Morongo Road that he plans to soon begin converting into a cultivation facility.

"This is going to be all built out into a high-tech, 40-light grow right here," Elsasser said, using the number of overhead lights the facility will contain to indicate its size.

Pointing to a chain-link fence surrounded by brush, he added, "Back there is going to be all greenhouses."

Then Elsasser gestured toward a handful of buildings down the road that were owned by other growers and developers.

"Those are all going to be cultivation," he said.

Little Morongo Road will eventually be the backbone of a bustling warehouse zone, packed to the brim with growers, Elsasser said.

"This property is right on Park Avenue," he said, waving toward the desert brush and dusty road and imagining the swanky New York thoroughfare. "It may not look like it. But it is."

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Citrus Valley High School hosts discussion on teen suicide

BY AARON GRECH ON MAY 9, 2016NEWS, NEWS IN BRIEF



Courtesy of Youtube

The city of Redlands hosted a discussion on teen suicide on May 7 entitled, “Let’s Talk About It,” at Citrus Valley High School, after four recent teen suicides occurred in San Bernardino County during April. The talk hosted by Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE) discussed the warning signs of teen suicide, preventive measures, suicide pacts and suicide contagion — which is a phenomenon where direct or indirect exposure to suicide can put others at risk for suicide.

Three of the victims, one male and two females, were from Redlands and attended separate high schools. The other victim was a teenage female from Colton. According to the investigators none of the cases were related.

These incidents reflect a national trend according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as teen suicide rates have increased by 24 percent from 1999-2014. According to Captain Kevin Lacy of the San Bernardino County Coroner’s Department, April 2016 saw the highest number of suicides countywide among all age groups. “We had a period of time where it seemed we were getting one or



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5/10/2016

Citrus Valley High School hosts discussion on teen suicide -

two a day this month," Lacy told the [Press Enterprise](#).

"We don't want the public to be frightened by this in a sense that there is some sort of epidemic going on, because there isn't," Daniel J. Reidenberg, executive director of SAVE explained regarding this event. "It's a problem because there's an increase, period. We have to be concerned about it. We have to be alarmed about it."

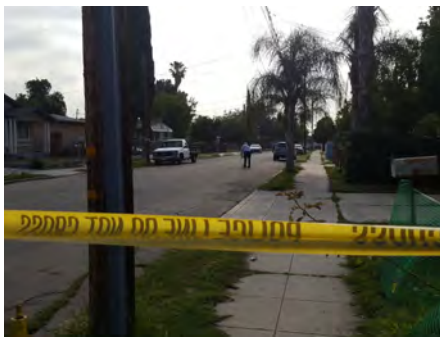
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## SAN BERNARDINO: Victim identified in city's 26th homicide of 2016 (UPDATE 2)

By [BEATRIZ VALENZUELA](#)

2016-05-09 08:25:14



Police investigated the city's 26th homicide of the year Monday morning after a man was fatally shot in the 1100 block of Vine Street West in San Bernardino.

Shortly before 4 a.m., police received calls of shots being fired near 8th and L streets, said Lt. Rich Lawhead.

A short time later, police received a call from Community Hospital about a gunshot victim who was brought in. That victim, later identified as Gilbert Rey, 26, of San Bernardino, later died.

The victim was reportedly the passenger in the vehicle that was fired upon, Lawhead said. The initial investigation suggests the shooting is gang-related. No suspect description was available.

As that investigation continued Monday morning, children holding school projects had to be escorted out of the crime scene.

As word spread about the fatal shooting, the narrow streets in the neighborhood became congested with curious residents.

Jamie Brown, who's lived here three years, said she heard about 10 shots early Monday morning.

"When I heard it, I knew it was close by," she said. "It was too close. It's about time I move from here."

Julie Vargas, who says she thinks she knows the man killed, hopes the shooter or shooters are caught.

Vargas is no stranger to the gun violence that has plagued the area this year.

Last month, her cousin, Kirk Savala, was shot and killed while he and his wife stood in the driveway of their Highland home.

The sounds of gunshots are nothing new in the area, said some residents.

One woman, who did not want to be identified for fear of retaliation, said she and her family heard a series of gunshots Mother's Day evening while they were holding a cookout at their home.

The dead man's identity has not been released. This is the city's first homicide since April 28 when Vincent Gandara was shot and killed.

This year, 26 people have been killed in San Bernardino compared to 44 homicides last year.

Monday's fatal shooting comes as police — with help from neighboring agencies, including the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department — set Operation Safe Streets into motion in an effort to curb violence on the streets on the city. The violence reached a climax during a bloody 11-day span from April 17 to April 28 where

LOCAL / CALIFORNIA

# After L.A. cleared out homeless encampments, here's what happened to some Tujunga Wash dwellers



Dave Curry, right, visits his friend Russell Badgwell in Tujunga Wash, the place he used to call home. Curry received a Section 8 voucher from a San Fernando Valley housing agency and now lives in an apartment. (Francine Orr / Los Angeles Times)

By **Doug Smith** • Contact Reporter

MAY 9, 2016, 3:30 AM

# A

fter a decade in the riverbed, Dave Curry was ready to try living under a roof.

With the help of a San Fernando Valley housing agency, Curry got a [Section 8](#) voucher and went looking for an apartment.

He was a few weeks into his search when his campsite in Tujunga Wash was demolished. Curry was one of about 30 men and women uprooted last fall in a series of cleanups conducted by the city of Los

Angeles and nearby residents.

A few slipped back into the wash. But most dispersed, leaving no record of where they went or how their lives changed.

It's a story that was repeated nearly 1,000 times last year, on scales large and small: Tents and shopping carts appear, residents complain, sanitation crews arrive to clear away the camps. But where did the displaced people go?

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In the absence of an official account, the presumed answer is that they went somewhere else, to another street, another alley, another drainage ditch.

But that's not always the case, and it wasn't in the wash. Like Curry, many of the wash dwellers were already working with the housing agency in the hope of regaining a traditional life. Some have succeeded in getting housing. Seven months later, others are still struggling with bureaucratic and human obstacles.

To illuminate the difficult path out of homelessness, LA Family Housing, the agency that was working with Curry, obtained permission from several of the Tujunga Wash dwellers to tell their stories.

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Eric Montoya, LA Family Housing's outreach worker in Tujunga Wash, parked the white van on Big Tujunga Canyon Road. Montoya hiked a quarter-mile over sand and boulders, crossing the creek then flush with spring runoff.

In a clearing cut out of tall shrubs, he found Russell Badgwell, sun-bleached hair cascading to his shirtless shoulders, sitting on a beach chair beside his tent while sausages crackled on a propane camp stove.

The purpose of the visit was partly pep talk and partly a nudge to keep Badgwell on track.

After months of give-and-take, the former auto mechanic had decided early in January to seek housing.

Montoya had helped him get food stamps.

Next was applying for general relief, a \$221 monthly county payment. Badgwell didn't show a great deal of motivation. He said he made enough money recycling.

But Montoya reminded him he needed proof that he could pay his share of the rent, even though it could be as low as \$8. Under the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 program, he would pay only 30% of his income in rent, and could also receive a utility offset.

Badgwell said he hadn't gone to the welfare office yet because he had missed his doctor's appointment. The rules require him to have a doctor's clearance before he can apply for general relief.

Montoya said he'd make a doctor's appointment for the next day and take Badgwell in the van.

"I'll come back at 10 a.m.," he said.

Despite his procrastination, Badgwell insisted he was motivated to get an apartment.

"I just want to get a place to live, get back on my feet," he said. "If I get stable and get a shower and all, I wouldn't mind going back to work."

Nothing went as quickly as Montoya hoped. It took three weeks to schedule the doctor's appointment. Badgwell was approved for general relief in late April. With Montoya's help, he filled out the 50-page Section 8 application. When the Housing Authority schedules an appointment, Montoya will drive him to the Wilshire Boulevard office to submit it. Two to four weeks after that, he should receive his voucher.

Montoya next stopped beside a thicket and yelled, "Bill."

"I'll be out," Bill replied. "I'm getting ready."

Bill, who didn't want his last name used and didn't want visitors to see his camp, stepped out of the bushes a few minutes later, shaven, coiffed and wearing a freshly washed Hawaiian shirt.

Bill already had his Section 8 voucher, but he was having trouble finding an apartment and time was running out.

His voucher would expire Monday.

"Bill's heard 'no' so many times it's really hard for him to get out of bed every day," Montoya said later.

Bill once lived comfortably in a treehouse he built himself. That was torn down in a past cleanup. But until he finds an apartment, Bill said, he will continue to make the wash his home.

"I'm not going to live on the boulevard with a shopping cart," Bill said. "I don't want to impose on anyone. I did that."

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Montoya regularly visits about 100 homeless people in the northeast Valley.

He estimates that he puts 30,000 miles a year on the van taking clients to appointments at the doctor, the welfare office and the Department of Motor Vehicles, the first stop for many who don't have identification.

His insight into their lives is shaped by his own experience.

"I grew up with a troubled lifestyle, was in trouble most of my life," he said. After completing a drug treatment program in Sun Valley, he applied for a job there.

"I felt it was my duty to educate others and help others; that there [are] services available for them, the services that I never got," Montoya said.

He's now in his 16th year at LA Family Housing.

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Before the cleanups last fall, Montoya had placed 10 former wash dwellers in LA Family Housing's new Day Street complex, a 49-unit apartment building in Tujunga with medical and social services on site. Day Street is now fully occupied, crimping Montoya's housing options.

Still, since the cleanups, Montoya has relocated 24 people from the wash. Thirteen obtained Section 8 vouchers and stay in LA Family Housing's 250-bed shelter in North Hollywood. They are looking for their own apartments. Four moved in with family or friends, including one young woman who was five months pregnant when she was displaced. She and her baby are living with a friend.

Seven have obtained Section 8 vouchers and have their own apartments. Bill was the seventh. Eight days before his voucher expired, he found an apartment in Sylmar.

One died and one is in jail, leaving seven still in the wash.

The cleanups last fall may have hastened that exodus, but it was already underway by then, said Nathaniel VerGow, who supervises LA Family Housing's five outreach workers.

The stimulus was a policy shift in Washington and locally that gave the chronically homeless priority for housing vouchers.

After years in which housing vouchers were almost impossible to get, Montoya was allocated a handful

for his clients in Tujunga Wash.

Curry was his first taker.

Montoya first encountered Curry on the night of L.A. County's homeless survey in January 2015. The onetime construction worker had settled into the wash a decade earlier after an illness forced him to stop working and his trailer was foreclosed on.

"He didn't want anything to do with us," Montoya said. "He was happy in his tent. There was an old Bowflex. He worked out every day."

Other outreach workers had promised Curry things but couldn't deliver. Montoya didn't have much to offer either.

"At the time it was just shelter," he said. "He didn't want shelter."

Montoya kept trying.

"I would go out weekly, take him water, backpack with supplies, trash bags so he could try to keep his area clean," he said.

Then the housing vouchers came through.

"I thought he would turn it down and say give it to the next person," Montoya said. "When he was able to see there was an end to his homelessness and he didn't have to live in a tent anymore, he jumped on it."

Curry's decision set off a chain reaction.

"Not too long after Dave got his voucher, everyone down in the wash wanted a voucher," Montoya said. "Everybody was just coming out of the woodwork saying, 'I need help.'"

But Curry's search didn't go well.

"Dave was riding his bike all over Sunland-Tujunga," Montoya said. "He would go from apartment to apartment looking for vacancies and for potential landlords who would take the voucher. He wasn't having any luck."

In November, the voucher expired after 240 days. He had to apply again and wait for a new one.

"Toward the end, he almost wanted to give up," Montoya said.



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Amy Perkins, LA Family Housing's rapid re-housing manager, works the phones every day. She and a team of "navigators" make cold calls to landlords — from mom and pops to corporate property managers — with one question: "Do you have a vacancy for a Section 8 voucher?"

Perkins presents it as a "win-win": guaranteed rent paid on time and support from LA Family Housing if trouble arises.

The state of the rental market makes it a hard sell. With the vacancy rate plunging to 2.7% late last year and rents on the rise, landlords are often able to command more than Section 8 allows.

So her pitch is partly emotional, imploring landlords "to see how happy some of our housing partners are in the community, to see how happy they can be in the placements they have."

A prime example is Sam Keshish, a used-car dealer who has invested over the years in apartment buildings.

Perkins cold-called Keshish, and they clicked.

"We just kind of developed a phone rapport," Perkins said.

He took one of her clients and it worked out. Others followed. For Keshish, renting to the homeless became a mission.

"Something needs to be done," he said. "Somebody needs to step up and do it."

Perkins called Keshish several times last year about Curry. He had nothing.

Then, this year, a tenant vacated the yellow duplex over Keshish's Foothill Boulevard dealership. Keshish renovated the apartment and rented it to Curry.

Curry now has space for the possessions he has collected over the years, including two giant speakers, a solar cell and lots of tools.

He has a proper home for his dog, Boo.

And he enjoys his new ease.

"I can go to the bathroom whenever I want," he said. "And I take a shower every day."

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## The 'Incline' Railway in the San Bernardino Mountains

By Mark Landis, San Bernardino County Sun

Tuesday, May 10, 2016



In the early 1900s, bigger and better electric railroad systems were seen as the future, and residents of the San Bernardino Valley had a dream of building a magnificent mountain tourist railroad that almost came true. The dream was at least partly inspired by the success of the nearby Mount Lowe Railway.

In the 1880s, several enterprising businessmen in the San Bernardino Valley began to develop a network of local rail and streetcar lines. These small independent lines were spreading across the valley and providing local service, but they lacked a connection to Los Angeles and the coastal towns.

Just 50 miles to the west, Henry Huntington's Pacific Electric Railway system was rapidly expanding across Southern California.

The crown jewel of the PE system was the famous Mount Lowe Railway, a unique tourist line that carried passengers from Altadena, up into the San Gabriel Mountains.

Huntington's company purchased the line in 1901.

The Mount Lowe Railway capitalized on the remarkable opportunity for passengers in a booming population center to step just outside of town, and take an unrivaled trolley ride through rugged canyons and stunning mountain scenery. The final destination was the picturesque Alpine Tavern resort owned by the railway.

As with other mountain railroads, Mount Lowe used an incline rail system also known as a "funicular" to carry passengers up the steepest section of the line. At the end of the incline, passengers would disembark, and transfer to the upper trolley system called the "Alpine Division."

The famous Mount Lowe incline traveled 3,200 feet and gained 1,325 feet of elevation over grades of 48 percent to 62 percent.

Mount Lowe was widely advertised as the "Greatest Mountain Railway Trip in all the World." As one of Southern California's premier tourist attractions, it was the envy of every city across the region.

Huntington was steadily stretching his lines eastward to capture the passenger and freight traffic from the inland valleys. In 1905, Huntington companies staged a coup and took control of the San Bernardino

Valley Traction Company, the region's largest electric trolley system. A connection to the main PE system in the Los Angeles area was completed in 1914.

The new owners of the SBVT began making extensive upgrades and expansions to the system which included a long-desired line to the Arrowhead Springs Hotel. The aptly named the "Arrowhead Line" was completed in 1907. It ran from a depot in downtown San Bernardino, to the mouth of Waterman Canyon, where it veered east to an upper terminus near the Arrowhead Springs Hotel.

The completion of the Arrowhead Line opened up new possibilities in the minds of San Bernardino Valley residents; why not just extend the line and make a connection to the mountain resorts?

Another piece of the railroad dream began taking shape in 1905 when the Arrowhead Reservoir Company announced they would build an incline railway up the steep slopes of Waterman Canyon to haul construction materials to their reservoir project.

The Arrowhead incline was completed in June of 1907, and the tiny mountain community of Skyland Heights at the top of the incline changed their post office name to "Incline."

The Arrowhead incline used a three-rail design similar to Mount Lowe, and was 4,170 feet long, with a 1,769 feet total elevation gain. However, the Arrowhead incline was constructed for hauling freight, and it did not have the extensive grading and bridgework needed for smooth passenger service. In fact, there were major grade changes and dips that made the incline very rough and mechanically unreliable.

From the beginning, the Arrowhead incline was plagued by mechanical problems. The original steam engine that powered the cable system was replaced by a modern electric motor, but major mechanical problems continued.

A few bold souls rode the freight cars up and down the Arrowhead incline, but there was never any official passenger service on the line.

In spite of all the obstacles, San Bernardino Valley residents believed the pieces were coming together for their mountain railroad. Newspapers and proponents of the scheme immediately began to speculate that the Arrowhead Line would be extended to the incline, which could then be linked to a tourist railroad in the pines.

On April 16, 1907, an editorial in the San Bernardino Times Index surmised;

"The changes being made in the incline are of a permanent nature and they indicate that the Arrowhead extension will not stop at the mouth of Waterman Canyon, but will be carried on and up to the canyon until the electric road reaches the foot of the incline, where passengers will be transferred to be taken to the crest."

On April 22, 1907, SBVT manager A.C. Denman tried to tamp down the enthusiasm, but he didn't deny the possibilities; "We contemplate extending the Arrowhead Line through Waterman Canyon some day [sic], but that day is so far into the future that nothing definite can be said in regard to it."

The ambitious proponents of the mountain railroad had some major problems standing in the way of their dream. One large factor was Henry Huntington's disapproval of the Arrowhead Line, and his realization that it was losing proposition from the beginning. In 1910, the SBVT's manager A.B. Merrihew described Huntington's view; "There is a line which cost \$180,000, running to a hotel of \$100,000, capable of caring for 80 people. Never in a thousand years will the line pay unless there is water secured for the territory about it and it is settled up."

Extending the money-losing Arrowhead Line 3 miles up Waterman Canyon over costly grading and bridgework to connect with a problem-plagued incline didn't make sense to the railroad men.

The final blow to the mountain railroad dream came in 1911, when the already abandoned Arrowhead incline was severely damaged in a major wildfire.

In the 1920s, large state and federal funds were appropriated to build and improve a "high-gear" road up Waterman Canyon. Automobiles and buses became practical modes of transportation into the mountain communities, and the notion of a mountain railroad tourist line was all but forgotten.

Wildfires plagued Mount Lowe, and the Alpine Tavern and other facilities were destroyed by a fire in 1936. The great flood of 1938 wiped out other key facilities, finally closing the door on the great mountain railway saga.

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160510/the-incline-railway-in-the-san-bernardino-mountains>

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